

## REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of the above-identified application is requested in view of the amendments made herein and the following remarks.

Claims 1-5, 9, 10, 12, 13, 17-25, 27, 29-33, 36-38 and 41 are canceled. Claims 42-44 are newly added. Claims 6, 7, 11, 14-16, 28, 34, 35 and 40 remain withdrawn from consideration. Thus, Claims 6-8, 11, 14-16, 26, 28, 29, 34, 35, 37 and 39, 40 and 42-44 are pending, with Claims 8, 26, 39 and 42-44 at issue. Claims 39 and 42 are independent.

Claim 39 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Saruta* (U.S. Patent No. 5,980,015), hereinafter *Saruta*, in view of *Kimura et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 6,270,199), hereinafter *Kimura*. Claims 8, 26 and 34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Saruta* in view of *Kimura* and further in view of *Koitabashi et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 6,325,492), hereinafter *Koitabashi*.

*Saruta* discloses an ink jet printing device that makes it possible to eject ink droplets of different sizes from the same nozzle. For example, that is accomplished by outputting within a first printing period, a first drive signal that is used to jet relatively large ink droplets from the nozzle opening, and outputting a second drive signal in succession to the first drive signal to jet a relatively small ink droplet from the same nozzle opening. The speeds and weights of the ink droplets resulting from the first and second drive signals are illustrated in Figures 7(a) and 7(b). Figure 7(a) shows the first ink drop speeds and weights with drive time intervals that elapse from the application of the second drive signal until the first drive signals are applied, respectively (column 7, lines 63-66). Figure 7(b) shows second ink drop speeds and weights with drive time intervals that elapse from the application of the first drive

signals until the second drive signals are applied, respectively (column 7, line 66 - column 8, line 3). Applicants observe that, assuming Figures 7(a) and 7(b) use the same scale, the speed of the drops in Figure 7(a) is different than the speed of the drops in Figure 7(b).

Claim 39 recites in part that the smoothing dots (smaller dots) are ejected at the same speed as the image forming dots (larger dots). In setting forth the rejection of Claim 39, the Examiner directs attention to Figures 7(a) and 7(b) in *Saruta*. However, as noted above, Figures 7(a) and 7(b) show that dots of different sizes are ejected at different speeds, thereby not disclosing the claimed feature. For at least that reason, the rejection of Claim 39 should be withdrawn. If the rejection is maintained, the Examiner is requested to specifically explain how *Saruta* discloses ejecting different size dots at the same speed.

Claims 8, 26 and 34 are rejected as being unpatentable over the documents applied to Claim 39 in view of *Koitabashi*. *Koitabashi* does not remedy the deficiencies of the rejection of Claim 39 and the rejections of Claims 8, 26 and 34 should be withdrawn for at least the same reasons.

Claims 42 is allowable at least because the cited documents do not disclose or suggest, alone or in combination, the claimed combination of features including that a position where the center of a smaller size smoothing dot is to be printed is changed within one of pixel areas arranged in a matrix form for printing dots therein. Claims 43 and 44 are allowable at least by virtue of their dependence from Claim 42.

For the reasons stated above, it is requested that all the rejections be withdrawn and that this application be allowed in a timely manner.

Should any questions arise in connection with this application, or should the Examiner feel that a teleconference would be helpful in resolving any remaining issues pertaining to this application, the undersigned requests that he be contacted at the number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

BUCHANAN INGERSOLL & ROONEY PC

Date: October 6, 2006

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